

# “Honey, Pack the U-Haul”: The Impact of Same-Sex Marriage on LGBTQ Residency Choices

Amy C. Rose

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## Abstract

This paper explores the impact of same-sex marriage legalization on migration choices of same-sex couples. I employ American Community Survey (ACS) data from 2000-2019 to evaluate the impact of legal access to marriage on the residency choices of same-sex couples using an event-study version of a two-way fixed effects model. I observe that individuals in same-sex couples live in their state of birth at a lower rate than their counterparts in different-sex couples, which is consistent with previous literature. While about 60% of individuals in different-sex couples live in their state of birth, only 45% of men and 52% of women in same-sex couples do so. This suggests that people have a tendency to live in their state of birth, though this is lower for same-sex couples. I find no impact of the legalization of same-sex marriage on the share of same-sex couples who reside in one of their states of birth. This implies that access to marriage in a state of birth may not be compelling enough to move home for same-sex couples. I find heterogeneous effects based on differences in geography and gay tolerance. For example, in the least tolerant states there is evidence that marriage legalization may increase the share of same-sex couples who were born in state, though I interpret this cautiously since there is not enough precision to reject that these coefficients are equal to 0. This suggests that legalization of marriage may have had more of an impact on the state of birth share in less LGBTQ-friendly states.

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